



Department of Planning, Housing, & Community Development

Mayor, Matthew T. Ryan
Acting Director, Caroline Quidort

STAFF REPORT

TO: Planning Commission Members
FROM: Leigh A. McCullen, Senior Planner
DATE: October 25, 2012
SUBJECT: 47-53 Pennsylvania Avenue
TM ID #: 160-72.4.22, 160-72.4.23, 160-72.4.24, 160.80-3-1
CASE: 2012-50
COPIES: A. Sosa, T. Costello, C. Papastrat (District 5), M. Hass, G. Akel, File

A. REVIEW REQUESTED

Colonial Plaza Associates has submitted an application for Series A Site Plan to expand an ancillary parking lot. The project would result in the demolition of a single-family dwelling located at 49 Pennsylvania Avenue to provide for the merger, expansion and reconfiguration of existing parking lots located at 47, 51 and 53 Pennsylvania Avenue. The purpose of this project is to increase off-street parking for UHS, improve on-site circulation of the existing parking lots, and elimination of two existing curb cuts along Pennsylvania Avenue to decrease conflict point between vehicles entering and exiting the site and vehicles travelling along Pennsylvania Avenue.

B. ADDITIONAL REVIEWS

Since project involves new curb cuts onto Pennsylvania Avenue Traffic Board review is required. The Board reviewed the project on October 18, 2012 and expressed concerns regarding conflicts between turning movements from the subject site and neighboring driveways and impacts on traffic backup onto Pennsylvania Avenue. To address these issues the Board has requested that the applicant provide information on estimated peak traffic volumes, provide a site plan showing driveways of neighboring properties, turning movement counts from neighboring driveways, and information on traffic backup along Pennsylvania Avenue.

Shade Tree Commission review is required because the new portion of the parking lot is required to achieve fifty percent canopy cover. The proposed landscape plan was submitted to the Commission on October 17, 2012. Comments are expected by November 1, 2012.

The dwelling proposed to be demolished was constructed prior to 1940. Any building more than forty (40) years old must receive a Determination of No Historical Significance from the Commission on Architecture and Urban Design (CAUD) before a demolition permit may be issued. An application has been submitted by the applicant and will be reviewed at the October 30, 2012 CAUD meeting.

C. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & INITIATIVES IDENTIFIED FOR SUBJECT AREA

The subject site is located within the South Washington Street District. The Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2003, indicates that the lack of parking is a primary concern of the neighborhood. The increase of parking for UHS would alleviate on-street parking demands associated with the hospital.

D. STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL OF SITE PLANS

Listed below are the *Standards for approval of site plans* found in Article IX of the Zoning Ordinance. In reviewing a Series A Site Plan application, the Planning Commission is guided by the existing characteristics and conditions of the site, its surroundings, and the particular requirements of the Applicant. Elements of concern include, but are not limited to the following:

- Movement of vehicles and people
- Public safety
- Off-street parking and service
- Lot size, density, setbacks, building size, coverage and height
- Landscaping, site drainage, buffering, views or visual character
- Signs, site lighting
- Operational characteristics
- Architectural features, materials and colors
- Compatibility with general character of neighborhood
- Other considerations that may reasonably be related to health, safety, and general welfare

E. SITE REVIEW

The subject properties are located on the east side of Pennsylvania Avenue. Three of the lots are used for ancillary parking for UHS, while 49 Pennsylvania Avenue is improved with a single-family dwelling. The sites are bounded by a dwelling to the north, Park Avenue and Binghamton General Hospital to the east, a drug store and a grocery store to the west, and a parking lot to the south.

F. PREVIOUS ZONING BOARD & PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIVITY

39, 47, 51 & 53 Pennsylvania Avenue: In June 2007 CAUD issued a Determination of No Historical Significance for the demolition of a gas station and single-family dwellings to provide for the construction of a drug store and related parking.

47, 51 & 53 Pennsylvania Avenue: On June 6, 2007, Series B Site Plan approval for an ancillary parking lot.

48-70 Pennsylvania Avenue: In 1994 the Planning Commission approved a Special Use Permit to allow for a shopping center.

G. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The applicant's proposal is a SEQR **Unlisted** Action. The Planning Commission may be the lead agency to determine any environmental significance.

1. Motion to determine what type of action:
 - a. Type I
 - b. Type II
 - c. **Unlisted**
2. Determine Lead Agency and other involved agencies.
3. Motion to schedule a public hearing.
4. After the Public Hearing, Determination of Significance based on:

Existing air quality, surface or groundwater quality or quantity, noise levels, existing traffic pattern, solid waste production or disposal, potential for erosion, drainage or flooding problems?	Aesthetic, agricultural, archaeological, historic or other natural or cultural resources; or community or neighborhood character?	Vegetation of fauna, fish, shellfish, or wildlife species, significant habitats, or threatened or endangered species?	A community's existing plans or goals as officially adopted, or a change in use or intensity of use of land or other natural resources?	Growth, subsequent development, or related activities likely to be induced by the proposed action?	Long term, short term, cumulative, or other effects not identified in C1-C5?	Other impacts (including changes in use of either quantity or type of energy)?
X	X	X	X	X	X	X

H. STAFF FINDINGS

Planning Staff has the following findings:

1. The Planning Commission must determine if the requirements of Section 410-47 for Standards for Approval of Site Plans have been met.

The proposed project would consolidate four lots, provide for the reconfiguration and expansion of existing parking and the elimination of two existing curb cuts. The project would result in improved aesthetics and functionality of the site by providing for increased landscaping, decrease stormwater runoff into the sewer system by allowing for retention of at least a 10 year storm event for the new parking area, reduction in the heat island effect of the parking lot by increasing tree canopy cover, and reduction of conflict points between vehicles existing and entering the site by reducing the number of curb cuts onto Pennsylvania Avenue. Overall, the project would improve the operational efficiency of the existing parking areas and reduce demand for on-street parking associated with the hospital. However, all concerns of the Traffic Board should be addressed prior to approval of the project to insure that the project would not result in negative traffic impacts.

I. SUGGESTED CONDITIONS

If the Planning Commission approves this project, Staff recommends that the following conditions of approval be included:

1. A Final Urban Runoff Reduction Plan shall be submitted along a the demolition permit, building and/or grading permit for the parking area for review and approval by the City of Binghamton Engineering Department prior to the issuance of any permit.

J. ENCLOSURES

Enclosed are copies of the site plan, planting schedule, application and site photos.

Sincerely,

Leigh A. McCullen
Senior Planner

Enclosures